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ABSTRACT

This paper is designed to assist intramural administrative personnel in the development of summer school programs. The text focuses on the summer school intramural program developed at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. The topical areas covered include (a) program history, (b) staffing, (c) facilities and equipment, (d) scheduling, (e) team/individual/dual sports offered, (f) modification of sport rules, (g) awards, (h) recreational activities (free play), and (i) publicity. The author states that an evaluation of the Massachusetts program provides evidence demonstrating that even during periods of declining summer school student enrollments, a well designed and administered program can still continue to experience an increase in student participation. The paper concludes with a discussion of how increased participation, coupled with the return of the major portion of program funds to students in the form of wages, can be used to justify increased program financial allocations. (Author/RC)

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SUMMER INTRAMURALS - A PROGRAMMING CHALLENGE

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Paper prepared for the Twenty-Sixth Annual Conference
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SUMMER INTRAMURALS -- A PROGRAMMING CHALLENGE

Similar to the summer academic school program, intramural activities have existed on the campus of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, for many years. Prior to the summer of 1971, the intramural program functioned under the auspices of the Recognized Student Activities Office. During this administrative period the program was organized and conducted by undergraduate students.

Needless to say, this style of operation, lacking the necessary professional expertise, was unable to produce the desired results. Failures were found in the scope of activities offered, scheduling techniques, supervision, participation projections and overall management. These problems could be directly attributed to the lack of professional knowledge on the part of the undergraduate students rather than their lack of enthusiasm and interest.

In the Spring of the 1970-71 academic year, the Recognized Student Activities Office proposed that the professional intramural staff undertake the responsibility of the summer program development, organization and conduction. However, the program financing would remain under the jurisdiction of the Recognized Student Activities Office.

This proposal was readily accepted by the intramural staff with the underlying philosophy that the program would be run

on a first class basis. For this to be accomplished, the new program would stress a varied selection of activities and would be geared to entice the greatest possible number of participants. In order to achieve this goal, it was decided to offer team/individual sports for men and women as well as co-recreational activities. Team sports offered were softball and volleyball, while individual/dual activities included: tennis, badminton, horseshoes, paddleball, handball, squash, racquetball, bike race, cross country meet and a swimming meet. Co-recreational activities offered included all of the above dependent upon student interest.

Staff

A prime ingredient in the development and management of a quality activities program is the ability to attract qualified, mature individuals to direct and supervise the total operation. The professional intramural staff realized that for efficient operation of the proposed program the following positions, as shown in Figure 1., needed to be established. The Senior Program Coordinator is generally an older graduate student with comprehensive experience in physical education.

The Assistant Coordinator is similarly qualified and like the Senior Coordinator is employed on a 40 hour weekly basis. Two supervisors are employed on a part time (25 hour) basis. One has the responsibility of supervising the Intramural Office and building while the other concerns himself with playing

field and equipment surveillance. These individuals are generally uperclass students who possess an outgoing personality in addition to proven organizational ability. In order to attract employees with the mentioned qualities, a salary commensurate with the duties and qualifications is offered. Officials are selected from the summer school population on the basis of their interest and qualifications. The appointment of lifeguards is based upon the applicant's prior experience and possession of a current Water Safety Instructors Certificate. Wages range from $3.50/hour for the Senior Coordinator to $2.25 - 2.50/hour for officials.

Facilities and Equipment

In programming summer activities at the University of Massachusetts a delayed consideration may be given to facilities. This is possible due to the weather which is extremely conducive to outdoor activities. The numerous outdoor facilities include: softball fields, a track and field area, horseshoe pits, and tennis and basketball courts. Volleyball courts can be erected depending upon interest in this activity. There also exists a self-contained stadium perimeter road which is well adapted to the conduction of bicycle races and cross country running events. Normally the only activities scheduled indoors are the restricted court games, i.e. handball (4 wall), paddleball, squash, racquetball and badminton. These sports are conducted in the excellent facilities of the Boyden Physical Education Building that has been shown to be

specifically designed for participation.[1] In the case of inclement weather, outdoor volleyball games may be moved indoors.

Scheduling

Activity scheduling is the heart of intramural programming. In many instances during the normal academic year, scheduling must be adapted to fit into the time constraints imposed by enviroment and school calendars as well as the pressing need to produce an "all-campus champion". Fortunately, summer programs, being smaller in activity offerings and entries, are able to stress the participation factor of scheduling to the ultimate. Weather and time constraints being somewhat insignificant, summer scheduling can include a greater number of games per person/team and can allow for an increased number of teams/individuals qualifying for championship play.

Team Sports

During the past two years the 20 softball entries have been divided into two 10 team leagues. This has proved to be very well received. Teams play a nine game round robin (a minimum of 2 games per week) and strive to gain at least a fourth place finish. The top four teams in each league qualify for championship playoffs. The playoffs are a single elimination affair with the fourth place finisher in one league playing the first place team in the other. All participants seem to enjoy the "race" for a playoff bid and it is not uncommon for the fifth through seventh place team to be ...

contention for a playoff spot up until the last regular season playing date. Individual and dual sports are conducted in a similar fashion.

Modification of Sports Rules

All sports require rules. Whenever possible national rules are adopted which is in keeping with the policies of most intramural programs. However, in certain instances it becomes advisable to institute sport rule modifications to suit the specific needs of participating individuals. This is especially true in the area of co-recreational sports.

A popular summer team sport is co-ed softball. This past year it was decided to try a modified one pitch game. Essentially, this change provided for a total involvement of all players, whether male or female, and tended to equalize the abilities of each. The rule stipulated that each batter receive a single pitch and must attempt to hit the ball no matter how poorly delivered. Since the pitcher was a teammate, his/her objective was to deliver a "fat" one. The pitcher rotated each inning. The game moved so quickly that it was not uncommon for a 10 inning game to end in less than 50 minutes.

Co-ed volleyball represents another popular sport. One attempt to provide equalization has been the adoption of a ruling that if the ball is hit more than once on a return, some combination of male and female ball contact must be made for the return to be legal. In addition the female/male line-up pattern must be alternated so that with the serve there

are never three persons of the same sex at the net.

Awards

The familar statement that "the only loser in intramurals is the non-participant", contains a great deal of truth. Complete adherence to this philosophy would seemingly indicate that the ultimate award for having achieved in an intramural activity would simply be the opportunity to have participated. On the other hand, people still have a strong urge to be recognized in a tangible manner for their accomplishments. In attempting to bridge both areas of thought, participation is strongly stressed yet, at the termination of an activity small awards are presented to the championship team/individuals.

Recreational Activity (Free Play)

Intramural programs are often associated with only structured, highly organized activities. Certainly the intramural concept should not be so short sighted. At the University of Massachusetts it is firmly believed that structured as well as unstructered activities are both needed in a well-rounded program. Facilities are made available and supervisors are provided to accommodate students simply wanting to shoot baskets, lift weights or take a swim in the pool. A full schedule of recreational activities which include hours for the use of the bowling alleys, gymnasiums, basketball/volleyball/badminton courts, multipurpose fields, weight room and swimming pools is maintained. In establishing the schedule for open hours, careful consideration was given to the needs

of the potential participants, i.e. when would they most desire to have the various facilities available.

Assigned supervisors are responsible for the opening of facilities and issuing the necessary equipment for conduction of the various activities. Supervisors also tabulate facility usage and thereby aided the program coordinators in the scheduling of facilities to accommodate demonstrated needs and in the planning of future program offerings.

Publicity

The success or failure of any intramural program, especially a summer venture, rests primarily upon the quality of the publicity it receives. It is especially important in a short summer program (about 6-8 weeks) that the publicity be timely, accurate and receive wide dissemination to be effective. The summer intramural program publishes its own attractively covered twenty page handbook which includes a calendar of events, eligiblity rules, team manager responsibilities, types of programs offered and a description of the facilities available and their location.

The layout for the handbook is concise and straight forward. Its function is to convey as much information as possible in an "attractive" setting. The handbook is dispersed to the various departments and buildings on campus as well as to all team managers. It is important to get IM information to the various departments since only about 20% of our summer school students reside in on-campus residence halls. In addition, a large percentage of our summer students are

individuals from other institutions, many of whom may have never been introduced to an intramural experience.

The summer school newspaper prepares a special registration edition designed to provide broad coverage of the total campus-wide summer student programs being offered. The intramural staff takes advantage of this unique opportunity to announce its activity offerings. Each registrant receives a copy of the issue. In subsequent editions, results of completed contests and announcements of future events are made to the University community. The continuous announcement and reporting of intramural events and planned activities serves to maintain interest and stimulates entries for future activities.

Employed as an additional means of communication are announcements broadcast over the student summer FM radio station and the distribution and posting of flyers in heavily frequented campus locations. The use of varied communication media enhances the probability of all segments of the University community receiving program information.

Evaluation and Conclusion

A recent nationwide survey conducted by Opinion Research Corporation for the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports has recommended that intramural sports programs be greatly expanded in schools. It also gave evidence that as more individuals participated in organized sports in college they were more likely to continue participation in their adult years.[2]

To justify the financial growth of intramural programs, directors must be able to demonstrate participation increases proportionally equal to or greater than the additional amount of monies appropriated. By placing emphasis on a quality program containing a variety of well publicized activities guided by sound organization and administration, an increase in participation, even during periods of declining student enrollment, is possible. This can be observed in Figure 2.

Over the past four years, the amount of money appropriated for the conduction of the summer intramural program by the University of Massachusetts Recognized Student Activities Office has remained basically constant. However, during this same period, particiaption has drastically increased. In effect, the actual cost per participation has been reduced. It should be also noted that about 90% of the appropriated monies are returned to students in the form of wages. These two factors can be crucial considerations in presenting justifications for the expansion of current summer intramural programs of the development of new ones.

Summer programming is without question an intramural challenge. The University Of Massachusetts has undertaken the challenge and appears to be providing a successful, popular summer program (Figure 2). It is the hope of the authors that fellow administrators might find our experiences as presented in this paper beneficial in assisting them to successfully cope with the challenge of summer programming.

FIGURE 1

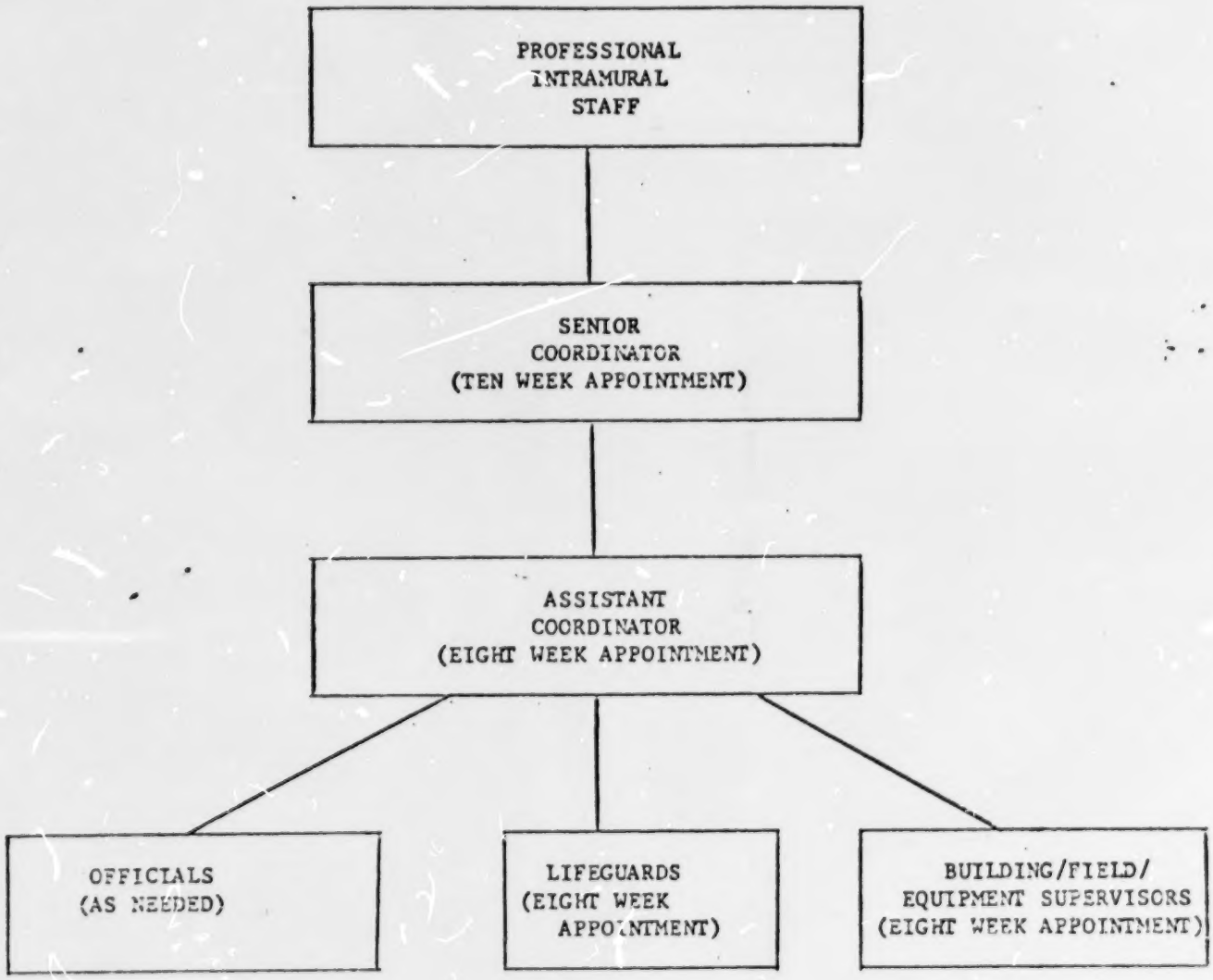
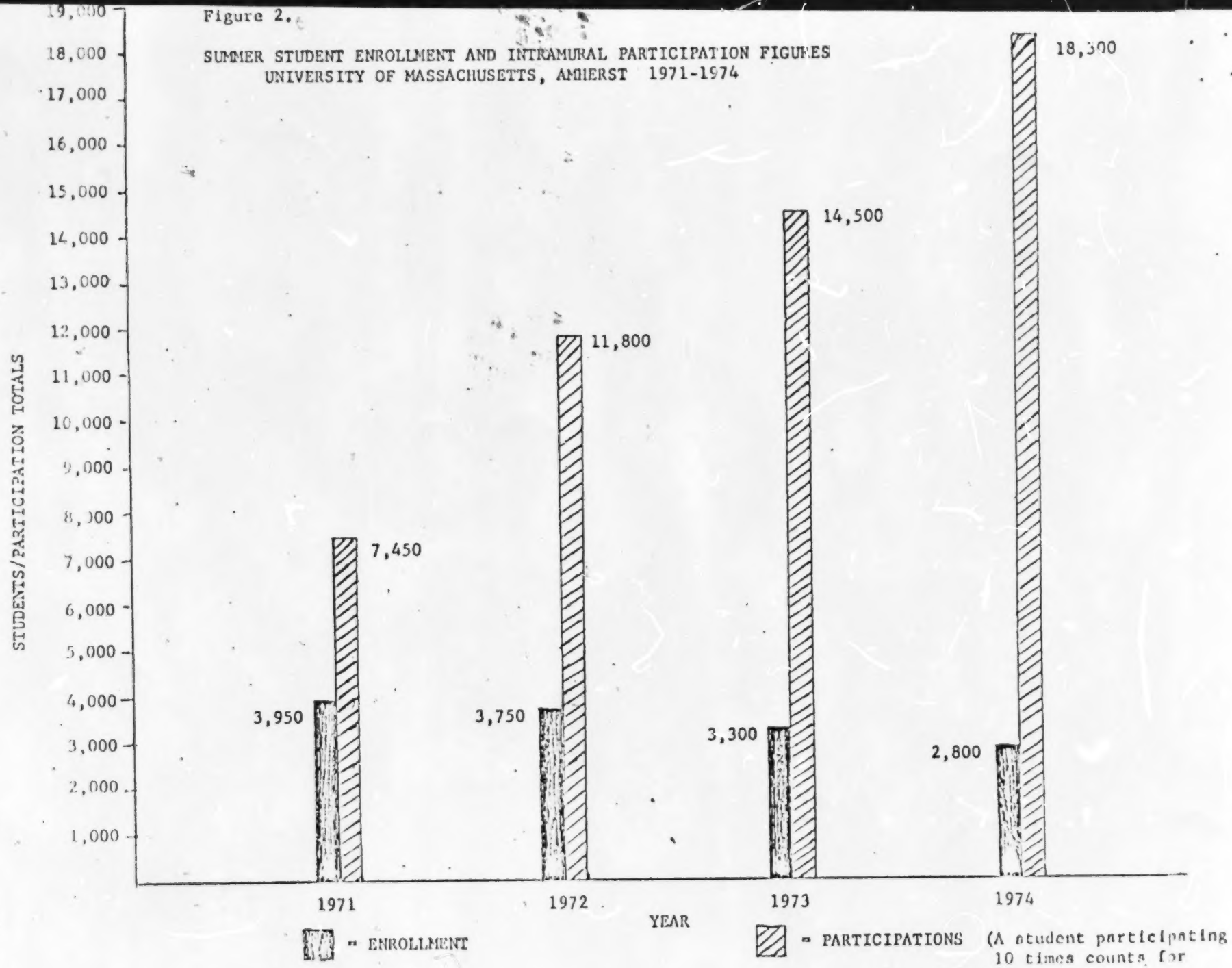

PROFESSIONAL
INTRAMURAL
STAFF
SENIOR
COORDINATOR
(TEN WEEK APPOINTMENT)
ASSISTANT
COORDINATOR
(EIGHT WEEK APPOINTMENT)
OFFICIALS
(AS NEEDED)
LIFEGUARDS
(EIGHT WEEK
APPOINTMENT)
BUILDING/FIELD/
EQUIPMENT SUPERVISORS
(EIGHT WEEK APPOINTMENT)

Figure 2.

SUMMER STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND INTRAMURAL PARTICIPATION FIGURES
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS, AMHERST 1971-1974



FOOTNOTES

1. Bischoff, David C., "Design for Participation", Johper, March, 1966, pp. 29-31, 62.

2. Physical Fitness Research Digest, President"s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, April, 1974.